

## Message Text

PAGE 01 CAIRO 09480 071518Z  
ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IGA-02 SSM-03 PM-04  
EB-07 INR-07 CIAE-00 L-03 /108 W  
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R 071313Z JUN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5863  
INFO SECDEF (OSD/ISA) WASHDC  
CNO WASHDC  
USCINCEUR VAHINGEN GE  
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK  
/HQ USCG WASHDC  
NAVOCEANO SUITLAND MD  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 9480

DEPT PASS AID

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EWWT EG  
SUBJ: HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY

REF: STATE 105696 (NOTAL)

1. TECHNICAL TEAM CONSISTING OF NAVOCEANO AND USCG REPRESENTATIVES AND HEADED BY CAPT J.E. AYRES, COMNAVOCEANO, MET AT MFA CAIRO WITH MFA AND EGYPTIAN NAVY HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE REPRESENTATIVES ON 31 MAY. MEETING WAS NOT ATTENDED BY REPRESENTATIVES OF OTHER INTERESTED GOE AGENCIES AND WAS NOT CONCLUSIVE. A SECOND MEETING WAS HELD IN ALEXANDRIA ON 2 JUNE, ATTENDED BY REPS FROM EGYPTIAN NAVY HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE, VICE MINISTRY OF MARITIME AFFAIRS, PORTS AND LIGHTHOUSES ADMINISTRATION, AND SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY. THE SECOND MEETING WAS EFFECTIVE AND THE INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL PERMIT PLANNING FOR THE PENDING HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY TO  
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PROCEED. ALUSNA AND AN AID CAIRO REP ATTENDED BOTH MEETINGS.

2. SALIENT POINTS AS FOLLOWS:

A. GOE CONSIDERS THAT ADEQUATE HYDROGRAPHIC INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AT NORTHERN SUMED TERMINUS (SIDI KHRIER), AND DOES NOT DESIRE SURVEY OF THIS AREA. SURVEY OF THE SOUTHERN SUMED TERMINUS AT EIN SOKHNA IS DESIRED.

B. EXTENSIVE HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY WORK WILL BE REQUIRED IN MEDITERRANEAN IN GENERAL VICINITY OF PORT SAID.

C. IT WAS LEARNED THAT SUBSTANTIAL DATA EXISTS FROM EARLIER SURVEYS CONDUCTED IN THE GULF OF SUEZ. EXISTENCE OF THIS INFORMATION WAS APPARENTLY UNKNOWN TO EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES WHO INITIATED REQUEST FOR HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY. ONE SET OF DATA RESULTED FROM A 1967 SURVEY OF THE GULF OF SUEZ BY WESTERN GEOPHYSICAL ON BEHALF OF PAN AMERICAN - UAR OIL CO. A COMPLETE SET OF CHARTS CONTAINING THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY WAS OBTAINED AND HAND CARRIED TO WASHINGTON BY CAPT AYRES. A SECOND SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED ABOUT A YEAR AGO IN THE RED SEA AND GULF OF SUEZ BY EXXON CORPORATION. DATA WAS FORWARDED TO MOD UK (NAVY) FOR INCORPORATION IN BRITISH ADMIRALTY CHARTS, AND WAS NOT AVAILABLE TO PARTICIPANTS IN MEETING. NAVOCEANO WILL OBTAIN DATA.

D. FULL EVALUATION OF THIS PRIOR GULF OF SUEZ SURVEY DATA IS REQUIRED BEFORE SCOPE OF SURVEY OPERATIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN IN THAT AREA CAN BE DETERMINED. NAVOCEANO IS PROCEEDING WITH THIS EVALUATION, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO REQUIRE FROM ONE TO TWO MONTHS. THIS REQUIRED EVALUATION WILL NOT DELAY COMMENCEMENT OF OPERATIONS, SINCE INITIAL WORK IS PLANNED TO TAKE PLACE IN VICINITY OF PORT SAID.

E. EGYPTIAN REPRESENTATIVES POINTED OUT THAT EXISTING NETWORK OF NAVIGATIONAL AIDS THROUGHOUT GULF OF SUEZ IS POOR. NAV AIDS ARE SPARSE AND CONFINED TO VISUAL AIDS ONLY. THERE ARE UNRESOLVED GEODETIC DISCREPANCIES BETWEEN AIDS ON EASTERN SHORE OF GULF AND THOSE ON WESTERN SHORE. EGYPTIANS STRONGLY DESIRE AN IMPROVED SYSTEM OF NAVIGATIONAL AIDS IN THIS AREA, INCLUDING A RADIO NAVIGATION  
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SYSTEM WHICH WOULD COVER THE ENTIRE AREA FROM THE APPROACHES TO SUEZ AS FAR SOUTH AS THE NORTHERN PORTION OF THE RED SEA. ALUSNA EXPLAINED THAT PRESENT TEAM WAS AUTHORIZED TO PLAN FOR ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING NAV AIDS AND DERIVATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT, BUT WAS NOT AUTHORIZED TO MAKE ANY COMMITMENT WITH REGARD TO PROVISION AND INSTALLATION OF NEW NAVIGATIONAL AIDS. ASSESSMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT, IT WAS POINTED OUT, ARE IN ANY EVENT A NECESSARY PRECURSOR TO ANY COMMITMENT FOR INSTALLATION OF AN IMPROVED SYSTEM.

F. ON BALANCE, EMBASSY IS INCLINED TO SUPPORT EGYPTIAN DESIRE FOR AN IMPROVED SYSTEM OF NAVIGATIONAL AIDS IN THE GULF OF SUEZ - SUBJECT OF COURSE TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS EXPECTED TO RESULT FROM THE PRESENTLY PLANNED EFFORT.

G. IT WAS AGREED THAT EGYPTIAN PERSONNEL SHOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO U.S. UNITS PERFORMING SURVEY OPERATIONS, BOTH ABOARD SHIP AND IN SHORE PARTIES. THIS WILL NOT ONLY FACILITATE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF WORK AT HAND BUT ALSO, AND MORE IMPORTANTLY, PROVIDE A MEANS BY WHICH EXPERTISE CAN BE TRANSMITTED TO THE EGYPTIANS, THUS PERMITTING FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF AN IN-COUNTRY HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY CAPABILITY (NO SIGNIFICANT CAPABILITY EXISTS NOW IN ANY EGYPTIAN AGENCY, CIVIL OR MILITARY).

H. A NUMBER OF OTHER SUBJECTS WERE COVERED IN THESE DISCUSSION. FULL DETAILS OF TECHNICAL MATTERS COVERED CAN BE OBTAINED FROM COMNAVOCEANO (CAPT AYRES).

3. ON 4 JUNE ALUSNA CALLED ON AMBASSADOR NABIL ELARABY, MFA DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, TO SUMMARIZE RESULTS OF ALEXANDRIA DISCUSSIONS, AT WHICH MFA HAD NOT BEEN REPRESENTED. ELARABY THOUGHT THAT SURVEY WORK TO BE UNDERTAKEN BY USN MIGHT BEST BE COVERED BY EXCHANGE OF NOTES BETWEEN EMBASSY AND MFA. ALUSNA AGREED, AND NOTED THAT PRECEDENT EXISTS IN FORM OF EXCHANGE OF NOTES CONCERNING 1974-75 SUEZ CANAL CLEARANCE AND 1975 MINESWEEPING IN MEDITERRANEAN APPROACHES TO PORT SAID. IT WAS AGREED THAT THIS EXCHANGE OF NOTES SHOULD CONSTITUTE A REVISION TO THE EARLIER EXCHANGE OF NOTES ON SUEZ CANAL CLEARANCE, AND SHOULD BE ACCOMPLISHED AFTER EVALUATION OF  
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PRIOR GULF OF SUEZ SURVEY DATA, WHEN  
SCOPE OF OPERATIONS TO BE UNDERTAKEN WILL BE KNOWN.

4. ELARABY THEN QUESTIONED CAPT BLOCK WITH REGARD TO MANNER IN WHICH U.S. WOULD TREAT ISRAELI-CLAIMED MEDIAN LINE IN GULF OF SUEZ. HE NOTED THAT U.S. AND EGYPTIAN POSITIONS REGARDING VALIDITY OF MEDIAN LINE ARE IN AGREEMENT, AND ASKED IF U.S. SURVEY WORK WOULD TAKE PLACE ON ISRAELI SIDE OF LINE AS WELL AS EGYPTIAN SIDE. ALUSNA RESPONDED THAT WE ARE TREATING THIS AS A TECHNICAL RATHER THAN A POLITICAL QUESTION. THE EXISTING TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME, AS IT HAPPENS, IS LOCATED PRIMARILY ON THE WESTERN SIDE OF THE GULF. ASSUMING IT IS STILL NECESSARY TO CONDUCT SURVEY WORK IN THE GULF OF SUEZ AFTER EVALUATION OF THE EARLIER SURVEY DATA HAS BEEN COMPLETED, WE WOULD PLAN TO OPERATE WHATEVER NECESSARY IN ORDER TO ADEQUATELY SURVEY THE AREA OF THE EXISTING TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEME AS WELL AS ADJACENT AREAS WHICH MIGHT OFFER ALTERNATIVE NAVIGABLE PASSAGES. IT WOULD ALSO BE NECESSARY TO OBTAIN SOME DATA BOTH EAST AND WEST OF THE CHANNEL IN ORDER TO BE ABLE TO ACCURATELY CHART EXISTING HAZARDS. THE END RESULT WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE THAT WHILE THE SURVEY SHIP WILL OPERATE MOSTLY TO THE WEST OF THE ISRAELI-CLAIMED MEDIAN LINE, SOME OPERATIONS WILL ALSO BE CONDUCTED TO THE EAST OF THAT LINE. IN THIS CONNECTION IT WAS NOTED THAT MORE THAN 30,000 VESSELS HAVE TRANSITED THE GULF OF SUEZ SINCE THE REOPENING OF THE CANAL TWO YEARS AGO, WITHOUT ANY REPORTED INCIDENT OF ISRAELI INTERFERENCE BECAUSE OF JURISDICTIONAL CLAIMS.

5. EMBASSY RECOMMENDS THAT WHEN SCOPE OF GULF OF SUEZ SURVEY TO BE UNDERTAKEN BECOMES CLEAR, FACT OF OUR INTENT TO CONDUCT THESE OPERATIONS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOVT OF ISRAEL BY APPROPRIATE MEANS.

6. TWO MEMBERS OF PRELIMINARY TECHNICAL TEAM HAVE REMAINED IN EGYPT AND ARE SCHEDULED TO VISIT PORT SAID 8 JUNE TO CONDUCT SITE SURVEY PRELIMINARY TO ESTABLISHMENT OF TEMPORARY NAV AID SYSTEM IN THAT AREA, FOR USE BY SURVEY SHIP. VISIT TO  
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PORT SAID HAS BEEN DELAYED BY THE WEEK-LONG CELEBRATIONS IN  
CANAL AREA, WHICH CONCLUDED TODAY. IF PORT SAID VISIT CONDUCTED  
AS SCHEDULED TOMORROW, REMAINING TEAM MEMBERS WILL DEPART CAIRO  
ENROUTE CONUS 9 JUNE.  
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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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